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This concluding volume dealing with the years from 1850 to 1861 is especially valuable because of the large number of developments in that period which have left their influence on our present-day life or have marked the rise of problems still unsolved. Constitutional questions such as the relation of the federal government to the territories, and the nature of the union were in the forefront of public discussion throughout the decade, questions of policy such as the treatment of foreigners, railroad extension, and our duty toward the West Indies were subjects of nation-wide interest, and parties were perfecting the organization of the electorate and clarifying the issues on which the approaching civil war was to be fought.

Few periods better lend themselves to interpretation by the methods Professor McMaster has chosen. The surge of popular opinion in the slavery controversy, the rush to settle the West and to exploit its mines, race riots, labor troubles, Cuban filibustering, the struggle for Kansas, the battles of the constitutional conventions, the party campaigns and finally the formation of the Confederacy; these are events which can be seen in no way more vividly than through the eyes of the contemporary editors and their correspondents.

The intensity of political life in the decade is mirrored in the fact that one-sixth of the five hundred pages of the book is devoted to a description of party conventions and campaigns and about an equal space to discussions of policy in Congress and to the Kansas conflict.

Many of the economic and social conditions emphasized show the earlier stages of problems still unsolved. Chinese immigration begins to trouble the West in the decade, complaints are made against immigrants, railroad control and strikes for higher wages and shorter hours begin to attract public interest, coinage reform and currency problems claim attention.

In a country so large and so rapidly changing as ours has always been, fruitful ground is offered for the development of unusual social phenomena most of which sweep into prominence for short periods to disappear again when new changes destroy the conditions under which they flourished. Of these the period just before the Civil War had its share. Then flourished native Americanism, the woman's rights movement, bloomeryism, spiritualism, prohibition, and Mormonism. The closing chapters deal with the strained conditions surrounding the formation of the confederacy and with the events of the conflict up to the inauguration of Lincoln.

Few works of equal size show as much symmetry of plan as this and few will recommend themselves so highly to those who believe history should be a picture of life as well as a record of facts.

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MAURICE C. EDMUND. *Life of Octavia Hill.* Pp. xi, 591. Price, \$5.00. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1913.

The gracious presence of the lady whose "counterfeit-presentment" adorns so many offices of charity organization societies in the United States pervades this attractive volume in which the biographer has played for the most part the modest rôle of editor. The book is more ample than the general reader will

find time to absorb, but not too minute or inclusive in its revelation of life and recital of work to meet the wishes of the numerous company of those whose ideals and methods in social service have been inspired and guided by Octavia Hill. The early trials of the family in which the mother's strength and wisdom impressed upon all the children that "if a thing is right, it must be done," gave the keynote of consecration; and the need to earn for self-support gave reality to the sympathy and fraternal feeling which dignified all later work for the poor and ignorant. Canon Barnett's testimony that Miss Hill "brought the force of religion into the cause of wisdom and gave emotion to justice" is well justified by this volume of intimate letters on public and private activity. High gifts of social organization, commanding powers of discipline in dealing with ignorance and wrong-doing, ready response to the commands of human progress were combined in this rare life with inexhaustible patience in personal ministry, abounding faith in human quality if rightly approached, exquisite refinement of feeling, broad culture, deep religious devotion, and self-forgetting daily service. Octavia Hill's name is permanently fixed to what is called "the housing reform." But most methods in this line work from the outside in through "model tenements." Her methods worked from the inside out, from improved people and homes to better houses; and this biography is a treasury of inspiration and guidance to those who believe that we must work to make better folks while we try to make better social conditions. Its clearness of sequence, its delicacy of treatment, and its balance of light and shade are testimonials to the high competence and character of its author and compiler. The book will greatly help in fulfilling the wish of Octavia Hill to leave behind her "greater ideals, greater hope, and patience to realize both."

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MORISON, SAMUEL E. *The Life and Letters of Harrison Gray Otis, 1765-1848.* 2 vols. Pp. xxiii, 663. Price, \$6.00. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Company, 1913.

Dr. Morison's account of *The Life and Letters of Harrison Gray Otis* is very readable, and throws many illuminating sidelights upon American history during the first three decades of the constitutional period. The picture of social life in Philadelphia from 1797 to 1801, of the political intrigues at the end of the Federalist period, and of the beginning of the control of the national government by the Republican leaders is especially entertaining and instructive.

Massachusetts' attitude towards the federal government at the time of the attempted enforcement of the embargo act is well presented in volume two, which also contains a valuable account of the Hartford convention, of which Otis had intimate knowledge.

The work closes with an account of Otis' policy as mayor of Boston and an estimate of Otis' career. As the author states "Otis, in truth, belonged more to the eighteenth than to the nineteenth century. He had no ambition for territorial expansion or world power for his country. Since the manifest destiny of the United States has been otherwise, we may say that it was well